Checking your hospital for the care you should expect to get

Original document title: What standards you have the right to expect from the regulation of your hospital
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About this guide

This guide is for people who need care, treatment or support in a hospital in England.

It tells you how good your care should be. These are called standards.

Standards are the things that all hospitals must do well enough.

This guide tells you what to do if your hospital is not good enough.
Who are we?

We are the Care Quality Commission.

We check all health and adult social care services in England.

We check services run by:

- the NHS
- local councils
- private companies
- voluntary groups.

We help people who are affected by the law called the Mental Health Act.
As well as hospitals we also look at other services like:

- dentists
- ambulance services
- mental health services
- care in residential homes and nursing homes.

In future we will also look at GP practices (family doctors).
We look at services for:

- elderly people
- people with mental health problems
- people with learning disabilities
- people with physical disabilities
- people with long-term health conditions.
Checking hospitals

The law says:

- every hospital has to meet the national care standards.

- they have to be on our list, called a register, before they can run any services.

If hospitals are not registered with CQC, they will not be able to run any services.

- we check hospitals to make sure they are meeting all of the standards.

We take action if we find a hospital is not good enough.

In the next part we explain what the 5 standards are and what you can expect from your hospital.
The standards you can expect from your hospital

1. You should be respected and be part of deciding your care and support. You will be told what is happening all the time.

   - you will be part of talks about your care, treatment and support. You will get support to help you make decisions

   - staff will respect your privacy and dignity

   - you will get support to help you live as independently as you can

   - before you have any examination, care, treatment or support, you will be asked if you agree to it.
Here is an example:

One hospital has a lot of women coming for checks who do not speak English.

Some of them have worries about what happens when they have their breasts checked for cancer.

The hospital has information in people’s own languages so they know what happens.

Everyone is treated properly and people are able to say if they agree to it or not.
2. You can expect care, treatment and support that meets your needs.

- your treatment and care plan will be right for you

- you will get any special food and drink that you need

- your care support will carry on when you move somewhere else.

Your hospital should meet your needs for your:

- culture and the language you speak

- sex (whether you are a man or a woman)
● disability

● age

● sexuality (whether you are lesbian, gay, bisexual or straight)

● your religion or belief.

The law protects your rights under the Human Rights Act.
Here is an example:

An older man is at risk of falling over. His care plan says he needs special food to help him get stronger.

Before he moved to a hospital near where he lives, they had been told about what he needs and were all ready for him.

They made sure he had his special food and he had a bed that he could not fall out of.
3. You can expect to be safe.

- you will be protected from abuse. Staff will respect your rights
- the hospital will be kept clean so you do not catch anything
- you will get the medicines you need, on time, and in a safe way
- you will be cared for in a place that is safe and accessible. A place that will help you get better
- equipment will be safe.
Here is an example:

Hospitals have strict rules about keeping clean and making sure you do not catch anything.

One hospital has strict rules. All the staff are trained so germs do not spread.

They know what things are just used once then thrown away.

They check their rules often to make sure they are working well.
4. Staff who care for you will have the right skills to do their job.

- staff will have the right skills to meet your health and welfare needs

- there will always be enough staff on duty to keep you safe and meet your needs

- hospital staff will have good managers

- staff will be able to go on courses and get better at their jobs.
Here is an example:

All the staff in hospitals are on the lists of organisations that say they can do their job. There are different organisations for doctors, nurses and others.

All staff still have training so they are up to date and can care well for patients.

The managers make sure there are enough staff on all the time. They are still able to do this even if some staff are off sick.
5. You can expect your hospital to check their services.

- the hospital managers will keep checking to make sure services are good enough and are keeping you safe

- your records will be right. They will be written carefully with no mistakes and kept private

- you can complain

- you can also get support to make a complaint. Your care home must sort out your complaint properly.
Here is an example:

One hospital often checks how good their care is in the wards where mothers have babies.

One way they do this is to look at what patients and families have said.

They also look at any complaints.

They also have questionnaires asking staff and families what they think.
Our checks said the hospital was meeting the standards.

We write a report about all we found and put it on our website for everyone to see.
What to do if your hospital is not meeting the standards

There are 2 things that you can do:

1. You can complain to your hospital.

2. You can tell us about the kind of care you get.

1. How to complain

If you have a complaint tell the hospital as soon as possible.

The hospital will have rules about how they look at complaints.
You can find out more about this on the NHS website:

www.tinyurl.com/NHScomplain

If you are still unhappy you should get in touch with the Local Government Ombudsman.

To get in touch:

Call: 0300 061 0614

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

For more information please see our complaints booklet on our website:

www.tinyurl.com/CQCcompHSC
2. How to tell us about your care

At CQC we do not sort out complaints ourselves. The way to do that is by making a complaint to the hospital.

But we still want to know how your care has been and if it was as good as the standards say it should be.

If you tell us about it we will use your information to make care better.

You can tell us what happened to you in different ways.
To get in touch:

Phone our call centre on 03000 616161

Or go to: www.cqc.org.uk/tellus.

You can also tell your Local Involvement Network (LINk).

These will soon be called Local Healthwatch.

They will send information on to us.
How we take action

Our inspectors go out and check hospitals often.

We always go and check if there have been any worries about a hospital.

We do not just check the hospitals rules and ways of doing things. We talk to people and find out about what happened to them.

If we find out a hospital is not good enough, we take action to make sure it gets better.

If a service does not get better we can:

- fine them
- give a warning
- stop patients from going in
- stop a hospital from working.

We write reports about what we have done and put them on our website so everyone can see them.

We also say when the hospital has got better and meets the standards.
How to find out about if your hospital is good enough

Find out how well your hospital meets our standards by:

- going to our website at:

  www.cqc.org.uk

- asking your friends, family or support workers to check our website.

  You can find the hospital you are looking for by typing in its name or the area where it is

- using our lists to help you choose a hospital in the area

- phoning us on 03000 616161.
Other publications

Other guides

- Checking your dentist for the care you should expect to get
- Checking your support services for the care you should expect to get in your own home
- Checking your care home for the care you should expect to get.
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